

LEHRBUCH DER SPECIELLEN CHIRURGIE für Aerzte und Studirende.

Von Dr. FRANZ KOENIG, Ord. Professor der Chirurgie, Geh. Med.-Rath., Director der Chirurgischen Klinik in Göttingen. Sechste auflage, 1 Band, mit 139 Holzschnitten. Berlin, 1893: Verlag von August Hirschwald. (Text-book of Special Surgery for Physicians and Students. By Dr. FRANZ KOENIG.)

No treatise on surgery has attained a greater success in its own country than has the work of Koenig among the German-speaking nations. It stands as a monument to one of the most thorough teachers and indefatigable workers of the German school. Although the work is used largely by students, it is pre-eminently valuable as a book of reference for practitioners of surgery.

This first of the three volumes of the sixth edition of the Special Surgery promises to bring the work thoroughly up to date, and comes from the press within four years after the appearance of the fifth edition. In his prefatory remarks the author states that the intention to have the first two volumes appear together had to be given up, for the second volume deals with the surgery of the abdomen, and since the year 1889 so much literature upon this subject has appeared, all of which must be gone over, that the second volume goes to press as the first is put on the market.

This first volume, a work of 700 pages, deals with the diseases of the head and neck. Beginning with the injuries of the scalp, skull and brain, it goes on systematically with diseases of these parts. The next chapter is devoted to injuries and diseases of the face in general, taking up in order injuries, inflammations, tumors, neuralgia and nerve resections, and plastic operations. The following chapter is given to special parts of the face; and in this are treated the surgery of the nose and neighboring cavities, the mouth, the jaws, the palate, the tonsils and pharynx, the tongue, the salivary glands, and the ears. The same systematic arrangement is pursued in the chapter on the neck. This includes the congenital defects, injuries, inflammations, tumors, diseases of the thyroid, pharynx, œsophagus, larynx and trachea.

All of these subjects are fully discussed. Not only is the grosser part of surgery dealt with, but questions of histological importance are also treated. Each chapter is complete in itself. Because of this fact there is much repetition. The author advises in each particular case that the wound be treated aseptically. In speaking of carcinoma of any particular organ, he is apt to observe that carcinoma of this organ is a disease met with especially in advanced life. This feature which makes each chapter a complete essay is certainly not out of keeping with a work of this broad scope. To make the subject complete even the most trifling details are given; and the German tendency to state self-evident facts is exemplified in a high degree.

The chapter on plastic operations on the face, that on epithelioma of the tongue, and the one on diseases of the thyroid are especially good.

Professor Koenig is a warm advocate of the use of iodoform gauze. He regards it as a great help in the achievements of modern surgery. The use of the iodoform gauze tampon, he believes, has diminished very greatly the danger of the operation for removal of the superior maxillary bone.

The section on laryngoscopy was written by Dr. Bose.

Statistics on the operative treatment of diphtheritic stenosis he is not inclined to regard of any great value, for the reason that the epidemics and the severity of individual cases is so variable. He cites as examples the statistics of Gosselin and others, who, out of ninety-five cases operated upon, lost every case; whereas in a single year in which he operated upon twelve cases, seven recovered.

Considerable attention is given to the operation of intubation, invented, he states, by Bouchut, and thirty years later revived in America, and employed also by a number of German surgeons. The results of intubation, he goes on to say, were soon reported as being better than tracheotomy, and this was no doubt true in America, where the results of tracheotomy were not so good as in Germany.

Professor Koenig is loyal to his German prejudices. He is not familiar with the English language, as are most of his colleagues; and his works, though rich in German references, refer but sparingly

to the literature of the western world. This is not because of his Hessian nativity, but because he regards German surgery as pre-eminently the most advanced. There are also an abundance of references of historic interest; and Hippocrates, and Celsus, and others, who are figuring less and less in medical literature, are encountered throughout the work.

The illustrations are good; that is, they clearly illustrate the particular point for which they are intended. Especially worthy of note are a set of cuts in the chapter on plastic operations, which illustrate the various incisions and sutures for repairing superficial defects. The general text is in clear, large print; and the less important matter, clinical observations, theories, and qualifications are in smaller type. The author writes in precisely the same verbose style as that in which he lectures in his clinic.

As an example of the sort of detail that is not introduced in American text-books on surgery, the following, from the chapter on tracheotomy, may be quoted, literally translated: "As it often happens that one has to operate at night, it is to be recommended, especially out in the country, that material for supplying a light be added to the tracheotomy outfit. For this purpose the wax candle is eminently sufficient. From five or six wax candles tied together with a string a very bright illumination can be made: and two of these bunches are sufficient to illuminate the field of operation. Of course, instead of these wax torches, candles, gas, or lamp-light can be used. Finally, it is self-evident that operations at night, even when by the best of light, are considerably more difficult than those which are performed in the daytime." It is true that the country about Göttingen is rather primitive, yet not so primitive but that in the poorest bauerhaus an oil lamp can usually be found, and always candles.

Notwithstanding certain superfluities this work is one of the best of surgical text-books. The large amount of information which it contains, the keen surgical judgment displayed by its author, the clinical examples cited, the completeness in every detail, make it a very valuable addition to the surgeon's library.

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